

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

*A History of British Ferns.* By Edward Newman, F.L.S. London, Van Voorst. 8vo.

WE rejoice to find that Mr. Van Voorst is not confining the valuable series of Natural History works which is issuing from his establishment to zoology, and beg to congratulate him upon the beauty of the first botanical portion of the collection.

The ferns have long attracted the attention not only of botanists but of all admirers of nature by their great elegance, and indeed we know of nothing more worthy of admiration than a lofty hedge bank, such as may be often seen in the western parts of England, covered by these beautiful plants of numerous species, of all sizes and in different stages of growth. We have often been asked to point out some work which, combining a popular account, with scientific descriptions and characteristic figures, should be equally fitted for the drawing-room or the study, for the amateur or the botanist, and have been compelled to acknowledge that no such book existed. These requisites are at length answered by the work before us, which we are quite convinced cannot be surpassed in the elegance of its numerous figures, equally deserving of praise for their beauty and correctness, and claiming our admiration by the completeness of its account of each species, and the philosophical views and pure love of science displayed in it.

Agreeing as we do with the author in most of his conclusions, we think it right to state a few points in which, in our opinion, the work admits of improvement. We consider the want of any distinct specific characters as a great imperfection; for although the distinctive points are fully stated in the account of each species, yet much difficulty is thereby introduced into the determination of the several plants. More exact references to the works of authors quoted, and the introduction of authorities for those localities in which the author has not himself seen the plants growing, even though he may have had specimens before him, would have been desirable.

A large portion of the introduction is occupied by an account of Mr. Ward's plan for growing plants in closed cases; a plan deserving of much greater attention than it has yet received, from its value in causing the healthy growth of ferns, heaths, saxifrages, and other plants in the centre of the smoky atmosphere of London, its use in promoting the successful transport of plants by sea, and its elegance when employed as an ornament of the drawing-room.

Great stress is laid upon the venation as affording the best ge-

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

*A History of British Ferns.* By Edward Newman, F.L.S. London, Van Voorst. 8vo.

WE rejoice to find that Mr. Van Voorst is not confining the valuable series of Natural History works which is issuing from his establishment to zoology, and beg to congratulate him upon the beauty of the first botanical portion of the collection.

The ferns have long attracted the attention not only of botanists but of all admirers of nature by their great elegance, and indeed we know of nothing more worthy of admiration than a lofty hedge bank, such as may be often seen in the western parts of England, covered by these beautiful plants of numerous species, of all sizes and in different stages of growth. We have often been asked to point out some work which, combining a popular account, with scientific descriptions and characteristic figures, should be equally fitted for the drawing-room or the study, for the amateur or the botanist, and have been compelled to acknowledge that no such book existed. These requisites are at length answered by the work before us, which we are quite convinced cannot be surpassed in the elegance of its numerous figures, equally deserving of praise for their beauty and correctness, and claiming our admiration by the completeness of its account of each species, and the philosophical views and pure love of science displayed in it.

Agreeing as we do with the author in most of his conclusions, we think it right to state a few points in which, in our opinion, the work admits of improvement. We consider the want of any distinct specific characters as a great imperfection; for although the distinctive points are fully stated in the account of each species, yet much difficulty is thereby introduced into the determination of the several plants. More exact references to the works of authors quoted, and the introduction of authorities for those localities in which the author has not himself seen the plants growing, even though he may have had specimens before him, would have been desirable.

A large portion of the introduction is occupied by an account of Mr. Ward's plan for growing plants in closed cases; a plan deserving of much greater attention than it has yet received, from its value in causing the healthy growth of ferns, heaths, saxifrages, and other plants in the centre of the smoky atmosphere of London, its use in promoting the successful transport of plants by sea, and its elegance when employed as an ornament of the drawing-room.

Great stress is laid upon the venation as affording the best ge-

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

*A History of British Ferns.* By Edward Newman, F.L.S. London, Van Voorst. 8vo.

WE rejoice to find that Mr. Van Voorst is not confining the valuable series of Natural History works which is issuing from his establishment to zoology, and beg to congratulate him upon the beauty of the first botanical portion of the collection.

The ferns have long attracted the attention not only of botanists but of all admirers of nature by their great elegance, and indeed we know of nothing more worthy of admiration than a lofty hedge bank, such as may be often seen in the western parts of England, covered by these beautiful plants of numerous species, of all sizes and in different stages of growth. We have often been asked to point out some work which, combining a popular account, with scientific descriptions and characteristic figures, should be equally fitted for the drawing-room or the study, for the amateur or the botanist, and have been compelled to acknowledge that no such book existed. These requisites are at length answered by the work before us, which we are quite convinced cannot be surpassed in the elegance of its numerous figures, equally deserving of praise for their beauty and correctness, and claiming our admiration by the completeness of its account of each species, and the philosophical views and pure love of science displayed in it.

Agreeing as we do with the author in most of his conclusions, we think it right to state a few points in which, in our opinion, the work admits of improvement. We consider the want of any distinct specific characters as a great imperfection; for although the distinctive points are fully stated in the account of each species, yet much difficulty is thereby introduced into the determination of the several plants. More exact references to the works of authors quoted, and the introduction of authorities for those localities in which the author has not himself seen the plants growing, even though he may have had specimens before him, would have been desirable.

A large portion of the introduction is occupied by an account of Mr. Ward's plan for growing plants in closed cases; a plan deserving of much greater attention than it has yet received, from its value in causing the healthy growth of ferns, heaths, saxifrages, and other plants in the centre of the smoky atmosphere of London, its use in promoting the successful transport of plants by sea, and its elegance when employed as an ornament of the drawing-room.

Great stress is laid upon the venation as affording the best ge-

neric characters for ferns, and it cannot be denied, that the form, situation, &c. of the veins assist greatly in distinguishing allied genera; but yet we must express our dissent from the author's opinion, when he says that he "is inclined to believe, that henceforth in the veins\* of a new fern will be sought the characters which shall decide its genus," and on this subject we cannot do better than quote an observation of the younger Agardh, contained in his recently published *Recensio specierum generis Pteridis*. He says, "Ex una enim facile altera oritur venarum configuratio, ita ut per seriem specierum maxime affinium, a simplicissima ad compositam structuram sæpe progrediunt venæ, unde species sæpe maxime affines in diversa genera divellerentur;" and afterwards he adds, "Ubi itaque apparenter ex una altera oritur venarum configuratio, hoc caractere tantum innisa genera, summa injuria me judice conduntur. Ad divisiones vero generum exstruendas, venarum decursus et distributio, meo judicio optime adhibentur."

Numerous changes have been made in the nomenclature of the plants, but in all cases the oldest name has been adopted and no new ones are introduced; the localities of each species are given in sufficient detail, and the illustrations are remarkably numerous. In the genus *Woodsia* the species are combined, nor do we know of any certain character by which to distinguish them. In *Cystopteris* also we quite agree in reducing the *native* plants to one species, a careful study of them in a wild state having convinced us that they can only rank as varieties. *C. regia*, Smith, we consider as distinct, but as not having a valid claim to be included in the British lists. We now come to *Polysticum* (*Aspidium*, Sm.) *lobatum*, *aculeatum*, and *angulare*, and here again we agree in most points, but differ from Mr. Newman in believing that the Linnæan *P. Lonchitis* is really the same as the Irish and Scotch plant known by that name, and probably distinct from the protean *P. aculeatum*. *Aspidium dilatatum*, *spinulosum*, and *dumetorum* of Smith are, we think, rightly combined, although several of our most eminent botanists consider them as truly distinct, depending chiefly upon the form and direction of the frond, the position of the upper surface of the pinnæ (either in the same plane with the rachis or in different ones,) and upon the much more deeply impressed veins upon the upper surface of the plant usually denominated *A. spinulosum*. See Hooker's Brit. Fl. ed. 4. p. 386, note. Mr. Newman combines *Polypodium*

\* This subject has been recently investigated by Mr. Smith of Kew, in a paper read before the Linnæan Society, of which we hope to give an abstract in our next Number.



neric characters for ferns, and it cannot be denied, that the form, situation, &c. of the veins assist greatly in distinguishing allied genera; but yet we must express our dissent from the author's opinion, when he says that he "is inclined to believe, that henceforth in the veins\* of a new fern will be sought the characters which shall decide its genus," and on this subject we cannot do better than quote an observation of the younger Agardh, contained in his recently published *Recensio specierum generis Pteridis*. He says, "Ex una enim facile altera oritur venarum configuratio, ita ut per seriem specierum maxime affinium, a simplicissima ad compositam structuram sæpe progrediunt venæ, unde species sæpe maxime affines in diversa genera divellerentur;" and afterwards he adds, "Ubi itaque apparenter ex una altera oritur venarum configuratio, hoc caractere tantum innisa genera, summa injuria me judice conduntur. Ad divisiones vero generum exstruendas, venarum decursus et distributio, meo judicio optime adhibentur."

Numerous changes have been made in the nomenclature of the plants, but in all cases the oldest name has been adopted and no new ones are introduced; the localities of each species are given in sufficient detail, and the illustrations are remarkably numerous. In the genus *Woodsia* the species are combined, nor do we know of any certain character by which to distinguish them. In *Cystopteris* also we quite agree in reducing the *native* plants to one species, a careful study of them in a wild state having convinced us that they can only rank as varieties. *C. regia*, Smith, we consider as distinct, but as not having a valid claim to be included in the British lists. We now come to *Polysticum* (*Aspidium*, Sm.) *lobatum*, *aculeatum*, and *angulare*, and here again we agree in most points, but differ from Mr. Newman in believing that the Linnæan *P. Lonchitis* is really the same as the Irish and Scotch plant known by that name, and probably distinct from the protean *P. aculeatum*. *Aspidium dilatatum*, *spinulosum*, and *dumetorum* of Smith are, we think, rightly combined, although several of our most eminent botanists consider them as truly distinct, depending chiefly upon the form and direction of the frond, the position of the upper surface of the pinnæ (either in the same plane with the rachis or in different ones,) and upon the much more deeply impressed veins upon the upper surface of the plant usually denominated *A. spinulosum*. See Hooker's Brit. Fl. ed. 4. p. 386, note. Mr. Newman combines *Polypodium*

\* This subject has been recently investigated by Mr. Smith of Kew, in a paper read before the Linnæan Society, of which we hope to give an abstract in our next Number.

neric characters for ferns, and it cannot be denied, that the form, situation, &c. of the veins assist greatly in distinguishing allied genera; but yet we must express our dissent from the author's opinion, when he says that he "is inclined to believe, that henceforth in the veins\* of a new fern will be sought the characters which shall decide its genus," and on this subject we cannot do better than quote an observation of the younger Agardh, contained in his recently published *Recensio specierum generis Pteridis*. He says, "Ex una enim facile altera oritur venarum configuratio, ita ut per seriem specierum maxime affinium, a simplicissima ad compositam structuram sæpe progrediunt venæ, unde species sæpe maxime affines in diversa genera divellerentur;" and afterwards he adds, "Ubi itaque apparenter ex una altera oritur venarum configuratio, hoc caractere tantum innisa genera, summa injuria me judice conduntur. Ad divisiones vero generum exstruendas, venarum decursus et distributio, meo judicio optime adhibentur."

Numerous changes have been made in the nomenclature of the plants, but in all cases the oldest name has been adopted and no new ones are introduced; the localities of each species are given in sufficient detail, and the illustrations are remarkably numerous. In the genus *Woodsia* the species are combined, nor do we know of any certain character by which to distinguish them. In *Cystopteris* also we quite agree in reducing the *native* plants to one species, a careful study of them in a wild state having convinced us that they can only rank as varieties. *C. regia*, Smith, we consider as distinct, but as not having a valid claim to be included in the British lists. We now come to *Polysticum* (*Aspidium*, Sm.) *lobatum*, *aculeatum*, and *angulare*, and here again we agree in most points, but differ from Mr. Newman in believing that the Linnæan *P. Lonchitis* is really the same as the Irish and Scotch plant known by that name, and probably distinct from the protean *P. aculeatum*. *Aspidium dilatatum*, *spinulosum*, and *dumetorum* of Smith are, we think, rightly combined, although several of our most eminent botanists consider them as truly distinct, depending chiefly upon the form and direction of the frond, the position of the upper surface of the pinnæ (either in the same plane with the rachis or in different ones,) and upon the much more deeply impressed veins upon the upper surface of the plant usually denominated *A. spinulosum*. See Hooker's Brit. Fl. ed. 4. p. 386, note. Mr. Newman combines *Polypodium*

\* This subject has been recently investigated by Mr. Smith of Kew, in a paper read before the Linnæan Society, of which we hope to give an abstract in our next Number.

*dryopteris* and *calcareum*; but to this we must object, as the character taken from the presence of glandular pubescence in the latter may, we think, be always depended upon. We have examined numerous specimens since the publication of Mr. Newman's work, and find it constantly present in *P. calcareum*, and always wanting in *P. dryopteris*.

In conclusion, we beg strongly to recommend this volume to the notice of our readers, as we are convinced that it is only by an extensive sale that it can ever repay the expense attending its publication.

*Iter Hispaniense, or a Synopsis of Plants collected in the Southern Provinces of Spain and Portugal, with Geographical Remarks and Observations on rare and undescribed Species.* By Philip Barker Webb. 8vo. Paris, Bethune and Plon; London, Coxhead, 1838.

*Otia Hispanica, seu delectus plantarum rariorum aut nondum rite notarum per Hispanias sponte nascentium.* Auctore P. B. Webb. Pentas I. Fol. Paris, Brockhaus et Avenarius; London, Coxhead, 1839.

We crave pardon of our subscribers and of the author for not having sooner noticed these two works, the former of which has peculiar interest from its supplying us with a catalogue of the native plants of a region which has received but little attention from naturalists, and which we fear, from the disturbed state of Spain, must long continue to be of difficult access to the student of the peaceful science of botany; and the latter is highly deserving of attention from its splendour and scientific value.

The *Iter Hispaniense* exactly meets our views of the best form in which a local Flora can be presented to the public, that is, that it should be for the most part a mere catalogue of names and localities, referring to the large descriptive works for the specific characters and the greater number of synonyms, but that descriptive critical and geographical observations should be introduced in those cases in which the author supposes that he is possessed of new or little known and valuable information. Several such works have been published of late both in this country and on the continent, and we receive this addition to their number with great satisfaction. The author is well known by the great work which he is publishing in conjunction with M. Sabin-Bertholot under the title of '*Histoire Naturelle des Iles Canaries*,'—a work which we fear has not received that attention from the scientific men of Britain of which it is so highly deserving. The plants are arranged according to the natural

*dryopteris* and *calcareum*; but to this we must object, as the character taken from the presence of glandular pubescence in the latter may, we think, be always depended upon. We have examined numerous specimens since the publication of Mr. Newman's work, and find it constantly present in *P. calcareum*, and always wanting in *P. dryopteris*.

In conclusion, we beg strongly to recommend this volume to the notice of our readers, as we are convinced that it is only by an extensive sale that it can ever repay the expense attending its publication.

*Iter Hispaniense, or a Synopsis of Plants collected in the Southern Provinces of Spain and Portugal, with Geographical Remarks and Observations on rare and undescribed Species.* By Philip Barker Webb. 8vo. Paris, Bethune and Plon; London, Coxhead, 1838.

*Otia Hispanica, seu delectus plantarum rariorum aut nondum rite notarum per Hispanias sponte nascentium.* Auctore P. B. Webb. Pentas I. Fol. Paris, Brockhaus et Avenarius; London, Coxhead, 1839.

We crave pardon of our subscribers and of the author for not having sooner noticed these two works, the former of which has peculiar interest from its supplying us with a catalogue of the native plants of a region which has received but little attention from naturalists, and which we fear, from the disturbed state of Spain, must long continue to be of difficult access to the student of the peaceful science of botany; and the latter is highly deserving of attention from its splendour and scientific value.

The *Iter Hispaniense* exactly meets our views of the best form in which a local Flora can be presented to the public, that is, that it should be for the most part a mere catalogue of names and localities, referring to the large descriptive works for the specific characters and the greater number of synonyms, but that descriptive critical and geographical observations should be introduced in those cases in which the author supposes that he is possessed of new or little known and valuable information. Several such works have been published of late both in this country and on the continent, and we receive this addition to their number with great satisfaction. The author is well known by the great work which he is publishing in conjunction with M. Sabin-Bertholot under the title of '*Histoire Naturelle des Iles Canaries*,'—a work which we fear has not received that attention from the scientific men of Britain of which it is so highly deserving. The plants are arranged according to the natural



*dryopteris* and *calcareum*; but to this we must object, as the character taken from the presence of glandular pubescence in the latter may, we think, be always depended upon. We have examined numerous specimens since the publication of Mr. Newman's work, and find it constantly present in *P. calcareum*, and always wanting in *P. dryopteris*.

In conclusion, we beg strongly to recommend this volume to the notice of our readers, as we are convinced that it is only by an extensive sale that it can ever repay the expense attending its publication.

*Iter Hispaniense, or a Synopsis of Plants collected in the Southern Provinces of Spain and Portugal, with Geographical Remarks and Observations on rare and undescribed Species.* By Philip Barker Webb. 8vo. Paris, Bethune and Plon; London, Coxhead, 1838.

*Otia Hispanica, seu delectus plantarum rariorum aut nondum rite notarum per Hispanias sponte nascentium.* Auctore P. B. Webb. Pentas I. Fol. Paris, Brockhaus et Avenarius; London, Coxhead, 1839.

We crave pardon of our subscribers and of the author for not having sooner noticed these two works, the former of which has peculiar interest from its supplying us with a catalogue of the native plants of a region which has received but little attention from naturalists, and which we fear, from the disturbed state of Spain, must long continue to be of difficult access to the student of the peaceful science of botany; and the latter is highly deserving of attention from its splendour and scientific value.

The *Iter Hispaniense* exactly meets our views of the best form in which a local Flora can be presented to the public, that is, that it should be for the most part a mere catalogue of names and localities, referring to the large descriptive works for the specific characters and the greater number of synonyms, but that descriptive critical and geographical observations should be introduced in those cases in which the author supposes that he is possessed of new or little known and valuable information. Several such works have been published of late both in this country and on the continent, and we receive this addition to their number with great satisfaction. The author is well known by the great work which he is publishing in conjunction with M. Sabin-Bertholot under the title of '*Histoire Naturelle des Iles Canaries*,'—a work which we fear has not received that attention from the scientific men of Britain of which it is so highly deserving. The plants are arranged according to the natural